

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Mark Crawford's Mayfly Nymph

If you have had a chance to fish Arkansas' Spring River with guide Mark Crawford, this fly will be no stranger to you. Mark has a unique take on fly tying – keep it simple. Mark's mayfly nymph is something of a simplified prince nymph, which is not really a mayfly imitation but it's his fly so he can name it what he wants. The point is – it is simple to tie, remarkably durable, and catches fish. When we fished with Mark in early October, Lorie and I caught a boatload of trout on this and couple of his other fly creations. Further, if you like prince nymphs, but hate to deal with the goose biot tails and wings, this fly is for you.



Hook: Dai-Riki #730 or #710 Size 8-12

Bead: Gold Brass of appropriate size

Thread: Brown or Black

Tail: Pheasant tail or rump fibers

Body: Brown, Black, Ginger, Yellow, or Olive Chenille

Wing: White Cello Packing Sheet

Hackle: Soft Brown Hackle

- 1) Thread bead onto hook and secure hook in vise.
- 2) Start thread behind bead and advance to hook bend.
- 3) Tie in several pheasant tail or rump feather fibers as tail extending about 3/4 hook length.
- 4) Pull excess fluff off end of chenille threads and tie in chenille at hook bend by just the thread ends.
- 5) Advance thread to behind bead, and wrap chenille to just behind the bead. Tie off chenille and trim excess.
- 6) Cut out a triangular wedge of the packing foam sheet so that it covers the top 1/3 of the body and extends over about 1/3 of the body.
- 7) Tie in on top just behind the bead.
- 8) Holding the hackle feather by the tip, brush hackle fibers back from the tip toward the stem and tie in by the tip right on top of the wing.
- 9) Make two or three wraps of the hackle brushing each backwards toward the hook bend.
- 10) Tie off hackle and trim excess. Whip finish and trim thread.

I suppose you could use peacock herl as a body and rib it with gold tinsel and get closer to a prince nymph, but that just complicates this pattern. We fished this and all of his flies without a dropper or indicator starting with a dead-drift presentation ending by swing it in the current and stripping it back with a few short twitches before recasting. Simple in design, durable enough to take twenty or more fish before replacement, and buggy enough to bring numerous fish to net; What more do you need?